[Mr. G. Raman Menon].

in North and Central Travancore, until the requirements of those areas are met, or until an equitably proportionate amount has been spent in those areas in comparison with the amount spent for the purpose in South Travancore, and afterwards for other general purposes.

Recruitment of Magistrates from the Bar.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI;

This Council recommends to the Government that 75 per cent. of the Magistrates may, in future, be recruited directly from the Bar.

Powers of the Text Book Committee in prescribing Text Books.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): I beg to move the following resolution:—

This Council recommends to the Government that the Vernacular Text Book Committee and not the departmental authorities be given the final voice in prescribing the text books for use in Schools.

To understand the force of the resolution, I would just describe the nature of the work that is done by the Vernacular Text Book Committee. The members of the Text Book Committee are required to go through a mass of books received by the committee and submitted to them for consideration. The first step is the process of filteration in which the approved books are separated from the unapproved books. Suppose the committee received 500 books. Out of these about 200 may be approved; And the remaining 300 are rejected as unapproved books. After reaching this stage and indicating the probable classes in which the approved books may be used as text books, the committee cease to have any further voice in the matter of selection of books. The rest of the function is entirely left to the departmental authority.

MR. C. P. THOMAS (*Nominated*): Do they say anything about the standard for which the book may be used?

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Yes, they indicate the standard for which the approved books may be utilised. For example, for Form III, 50 books may be suggested out of these 200 approved books. The rest of the process takes place in the recesses of the departmental office. In my opinion, the final voice in the matter of selecting the text book is, therefore, not with the Text Book Committee at all. During a previous stage of the history of the Text Book Committee, that is, till about the administration of the State by Dewan Mr. Krishnan Nair, the committee used to prescribe the books themselves and to send up the list of books selected and prescribed by the committee to the Government, and the Government used to accept the list.

MR. N. KUMARAN (*Nominated*): Was the same course followed in regard to other text books?

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Yes, with respect to the English text books also. I understand, since my resolution has been sent up, there has been some sort of trouble. Though the rules were

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

there, invariably the recommendations of the English Text Book Committee used to be accepted by the Government. Elsewhere, looking to the Madras University, the Board of Studies and probably the Academic Council prescribed the books. No other body in the University concerns itself with the question of prescribing text books. I am submitting the practical difficulty. I mean no reflection on any officer who has got anything to do with the prescribing of text books. What I am now pointing out is this. Can the Government be expected to do the best under the circumstances with the advice of the departmental officers and without the advice of the Text Book Committee as a body composed of scholars, *Pandits* and erudite men of culture as a whole? In my opinion, the collective voice of the Text Book Committee should be invoked in the question of selecting books, and in choosing them out of a number of books more than in the matter of separating the unnecessary books, for the selection is more difficult when you go to the really approved book and institute comparison between one book and another book since it requires probably greater ability and greater insight than the work of rejecting unapproved books. The previous practice was also to that effect. The practice of the University is also to that effect. Therefore, I am making the recommendation that the final voice in the matter of selecting and settling the text books must be left to the committee as a collective body. I therefore move this resolution for the acceptance of the House.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*) : I second the motion.

MR. R. KRISHNASWAMI AIYAR (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*) : I rise to oppose the motion. Before we resolve upon a change as to the authority that is to have the power to prescribe text books, a clear case must be made out that the present practice has not led to satisfactory results and that the change proposed will be better than the existing practice. I do not think that the mover of the resolution has succeeded in proving either of these propositions. The statement that he made, *viz.*, that the Text Book Committee had, till the time of Dewan Mr. Krishnan Nair, the power to prescribe text books is not correct. I looked up the rules relating to the Text Book Committee from the earliest times onwards and I find that the rule has invariably been that the Text Book Committee had the only power to report on such books as were forwarded to it by the Director of Public Instruction. That has been the rule all along, so that, what they have been doing has been to express their opinion on the books sent to them, to approve certain books and say that certain other books are not suitable for use in classes. But, at the same time, while they send in the list of approved books, they also, as far as I am able to find out, send a list of books which they recommend to the Director for being prescribed as text books. After receiving the list, the Director takes advice from persons whom he regards as competent and in whom he has confidence, and if he agrees to the recommendations of the committee, as regards the text books prescribed, he accepts their recommendation. Otherwise, he modifies the recommendation in any manner he thinks fit and publishes a list of

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. R. Krishnaswami Aiyar.]

prescribed books in the *Gazette* after obtaining the approval of the Government for that list. This has been the practice all along except for the period from 1917 to 1922. In 1917—up to that time there was only one Text Book Committee for both English and Vernacular text books—the committee was split into two, a committee for the consideration of English books and another for the consideration of Vernacular books. That was how we began to have the Vernacular Text Book Committee. At the same time a change was made with regard to the prescription of text books. That change was that, instead of lists of prescribed books being published in the *Gazette*, a list of books approved for use in the several classes was substituted, and Headmasters of schools were given freedom to use in their schools such books out of that list as they chose. This change seems to have been made mainly on the suggestion of the then Deputy Director of Public Instruction. For, I find from the papers that Mr. Hodgson, the then Director of Public Instruction, was opposed to it.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): May I know from the Director of Public Instruction who are the persons to whom he sends approved books for examination after receiving them from the Text Book Committee?

MR. R. KRISHNASWAMI AIYAR (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): The Director may consult whomsoever he pleases. He is authorised by the Government to take advice from any person whom he regards as competent to advise him in the matter.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): Are not the members of the Text Book Committee competent people?

MR. R. KRISHNASWAMI AIYAR (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): He can take advice from people outside the Text Book Committee.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): Then, why not such persons be put in the Committee?

MR. R. KRISHNASWAMI AIYAR (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): The Committee will become an unweildy body.

Thus, in 1917, a change was introduced, whereby Headmasters of schools were given freedom to select from the list of approved books whatever books they thought best for use in their respective schools. Mr. Hodgson objected to the change, and as a result, the old practice of prescribing text books were restored in 1922, with however one difference, namely, that they were prescribed for three years instead of for one year only as was the case before 1917. This is the history of the question. So what my friend Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai said with regard to the power of the Text Book Committee to prescribe text books up to the time of Mr. Krishnan Nair is not historically correct.

Again, I find from the files relating to the period up to 1917 that, although the Text Book Committee had legitimately only the power to report on the books sent to them, as a matter of fact, in addition to

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

doing so, they also forwarded to the Director a list of books which they recommended for being prescribed. During that period there were many loud complaints against the Text Book Committee, as regards the manner in which they made their recommendations. There were complaints in the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly and complaints were also made by the publishing firms.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Are there no complaints at present?

MR. R. KRISHNASWAMI AIYAR (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): There may be.

In particular, I remember one session of the Popular Assembly at which I was present—I believe it was the first or the second session—when one of the speakers said in very eloquent Malayalam that *Asrita vatsalyam* is very good as an attribute of Gods' but when it becomes the attribute of man, it degenerates into quite a different thing. I just mention this instance.—

MR. A. K. PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): We are not able to hear the Director of Public Instruction.

PRESIDENT: Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar, will you please repeat the illustration?

MR. R. KRISHNASWAMI AIYAR (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): *Asrita Vtasalyam* is a very good attribute when it is possessed by Gods. But, in the case of men, it sometimes degenerates into something far different. This was said with reference to the Text Book Committee of the time. I just mention this instance to show that complaints were very frequently made against the manner in which the Text Book Committee were making recommendations in prescribing text books. Till recently, the practice was for the Director to prepare a list of text books to be prescribed. This list would go to the Government for approval. And after it was approved by them, it would be published in the *Gazette*. Last year or the year before, I think it was in 1923, the Director pointed out to the Government that according to the Education Code he is authorised to publish the list of prescribed books without any reference to the Government and the Government agreed that his contention was right. They have accordingly since permitted him to publish the list of prescribed books himself without making any reference to them.

PRESIDENT: The time allotted to non-official business is over, and the House will now proceed from non-official business to legislative business of Government.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): The resolution will have to be put to the vote since the time has expired. All pending matter should be put to the vote.

MR. KAYYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*): That is only for the budget motions at the Budget Session.

PRESIDENT: Yes.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly